

Shimla: Army Training Command celebrated 77th Army Day on Shimla Ridge, organized an exhibition of weapons and equipment



Diary Times Desk : The Army Training Command (RTRAK) organised a Know Your Army programme on the 77th Army Day on Wednesday at the historic Ridge Ground in the capital. In this, people were made aware of the weapons and equipment of the army through an exhibition. Many types of weapons including AK 203, Grand Launcher, Soko Sniper, SMG Sniper, Binoculars, Machine Gun, Night Vision Binoculars have been displayed in it. In this, the army personnel gave information about the weapons used in the field by giving a demo to the tourists including the local people. They told which weapon is used in which situation. Along with this, information about the recruitment process was also given to the youth and children. Deputy Commissioner Anupam Kashyap participated as the chief guest in the programme. The programme started with a grand performance by the Army Pipe Band. Hundreds of people had gathered to see it. White, green and orange coloured balloons were released in the air. Military Martial Music programme was organised.

Steve Jobs letter on India trip for Mahakumbh auctioned for ₹4.32 crore: Reports

Agencies : Late Apple founder Steve Jobs's wife Laurene Powell Jobs is in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj for the Mahakumbh Mela 2025. Amid her visit to Prayagraj, a handwritten letter penned by her late husband Steve Jobs in 1974 has surfaced on social media. The letter has reportedly been auctioned by Bonhams for \$500,312 (nearly ₹4.32 crore) and reveals another side of the tech icon, as reported by NDTV. Addressed to childhood mate Tim Brown just prior to Jobs' 19th birthday, the letter reveals deep spiritual searching within him, as per reports. Laurene holds degrees from the University of Pennsylvania and Stanford Graduate School of Business, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

"Inadvertent": Meta Apologises For Zuckerberg Error After House Panel Warning

Agencies : Amid the massive row over Meta boss Mark Zuckerberg's remark on the 2024 general election, an India representative of the social media giant apologised today for the "inadvertent error". Responding to Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw's post fact-checking Zuckerberg's remark on 2024 elections across the globe, Meta India's vice-president (public policy) Shivnath Thukral said, "Dear Honourable Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Mark's observation that many incumbent parties were not re-elected in 2024 elections holds true for several countries, but not India. We would like to apologise for this inadvertent error. India remains an incredibly important country for Meta and we look forward to being at the heart of its innovative future." The apology comes a day after BJP MP Nishikant Dubey, who heads the Parliamentary standing committee on Communication and Information Technology, said Meta would be summoned on grounds of spreading misinformation for Zuckerberg's remark.



111 farmers join Jagjit Dallewal in fast-unto-death at Punjab-Haryana border

Agencies : A total of 111 farmers on Wednesday joined farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, in a fast-unto-death to push for their demands. Dallewal, a Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political) leader, has been on a hunger strike since November 26. "We had no option other than this. Dallewal has been sitting on fast-unto-death for the past 51 days and the government is paying no attention to it. So, we decided that 111 farmers would come in support of Dallewal. Yes, we are sitting in Haryana territory peacefully, and it is up to the Haryana government how they want to react, but our struggle will continue," Sukhjot Singh Hardo Jhande, leading the fasting farmers, said. As the farmers moved towards the barricades, the police mobilised its personnel there in large numbers to ensure that the farmers did not cross the border into Haryana.

Formula E race case: SC refuses to entertain KT Rama Rao's plea against FIR

Agencies : The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to entertain KT Rama Rao's petition to quash criminal proceedings against him in connection with the hosting of the Formula E racing championship, and told the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader that the allegations of corruption against him need to be examined first. Rao, who is the leader of opposition in the Telangana assembly, sought the SC to quash the proceedings alleging "political vendetta" behind the case, and told the top court that the allegations of payments made prior to the date of agreement during a time when the Model Code of Conduct was in place could be said to be a bad decision, but cannot invite criminality under the Prevention of Corruption (PC) Act. "That cannot be a ground to quash the criminal case. All these allegations will have to be seen," the bench.

KCCB Loan Scam: Vigilance notice to Bains, accused in 20 crore fraud case, not cooperating in investigation

Diary Times Desk : Vigilance has issued a notice to Yudh Chand Bains, accused in a loan fraud case of Rs 20 crore in connivance with the officials and employees of Kangra Central Cooperative Bank Limited (KCCB). The accused is not cooperating in the vigilance investigation. Last Monday, the accused was called to the Vigilance Office Shimla for questioning, but he did not come. The accused is on interim bail. Vigilance is going to recommend cancellation of the accused's bail in the High Court. Vigilance has taken the bank's records into its possession. The case is under investigation. Meanwhile, bank officials and employees are also being questioned. Vigilance says that Bains is showing reluctance to come to the office. Sometimes he talks about being in Delhi and sometimes about being out on some important work. Vigilance has registered an FIR against a person in Himachal's Una district for taking a loan of Rs 20 crore fraudulently and committing fraud in connivance with the officials and employees of KCCB.

Man Shoots Daughter In Front Of Cops, Panchayat, Days Before Her Wedding

Agencies : Her wedding was four days away. But her father shot her dead because she wanted to marry someone else. This shocking murder took place in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior where a man shot and killed his 20-year-old daughter in front of police officers. The daughter, Tanu Gurjar, had publicly opposed the marriage arranged by her family, expressing her desire to marry a man of her own choice. The killing unfolded Tuesday evening around 9 PM in the Gola Ka Mandir area of the city. The victim's father, Mahesh Gurjar, allegedly enraged by a video his daughter posted on social media earlier that day, shot her at close range using a country-made firearm. Tanu's cousin, Rahul, allegedly acted as an accomplice.



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Himachal: Rohru's Arnab met PM Modi, 39 students participated in the program organized at Bharat Mandapam

Diary Times Desk : A group of 39 students from Himachal participated in the program organized at Bharat Mandapam campus in Delhi. During this, Arnab of Rohru got a chance to meet the Prime Minister. Students participated in the program under the aegis of Central University. The group included students from private and government educational institutions of Himachal. On the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary on January 12, the students got an opportunity to listen to the views of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Vice Chancellor of Central University Prof. Sat Prakash Bansal said that out of 39 students, four got the opportunity to represent Himachal. Among them were Suraj from Sanjauli College, Vaishnavi Dogra from Dharamshala College and Nitin from Pharmacy College Rohru. For the final stage, Arnab of Pharmacy College Rohru got an opportunity to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi. According to Arnab, this opportunity was priceless for him.



Ensure smooth set-up for 8-10 crore devotees on Mauni Amavasya: Yogi

Agencies : Chief minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday directed officials to ensure seamless arrangements for an anticipated 8-10 crore devotees attending the Mauni Amavasya bathing ritual at the Sangam during the Mahakumbh on January 29. This includes coordination with the Railways for special trains, enhanced mobile connectivity, continuous transport services, and maintaining sanitation facilities. Reviewing the last three days' preparations for the Mahakumbh with senior officials, the chief minister noted that over six crore pilgrims had taken the holy dip during the Paush Purnima and Makar Sankranti festivals, an official release stated. "With a larger influx of devotees expected on Mauni Amavasya, preparations must be taken to the next level," he emphasised, according to a statement.

Kinnaur Road Accident: Car fell 100 meters below Spillo-Kanam road on the highway, two women died, two injured

Diary Times Desk : An accident occurred on Wednesday morning on the Spillo Kanam road of Pooh section of Kinnaur district. Two women have died in this accident, while two others have been injured. The injured have been taken to Khaneri Hospital in Rampur for treatment. The police have registered a case and started investigating the causes of the accident. According to the information of Police Station Pooh, four people were going from Spillo to Kanam in a pickup HP 27B 1105 on Wednesday morning. As soon as the pickup reached near the BRO camp at around 9.30 in the morning, the driver lost control of the vehicle and the pickup fell on NH-5 about a hundred meters below the connecting road. Local people informed Police Station Pooh about the accident. As soon as the information was received, a police team reached the spot. With the help of local people, the police took the dead and injured of the accident from the spot to the hospital. In the incident, 45-year-old Basanti, a resident of Bihar, died on the spot, while 61-year-old Norbu Jangmo, a woman from Spillo village in Pooh tehsil of Kinnaur district, died while being taken to hospital. The woman was declared dead at PHC Skiba.

SC notice on clubbing petitions pending before 7 high courts against CLAT 2025

Agencies : The Supreme Court on Wednesday said that it favoured the consolidation of all petitions challenging the Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) 2025 before a high court as it issued notice on a plea by the Consortium of National Law Universities (NLU) seeking transfer of various petitions pending before seven high courts. A bench headed by chief justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna issued notice to the petitioners in the high courts and posted the matter for hearing in the first week of February. While the court preferred transferring all matters to the Punjab and Haryana high court, where the first petition was filed, it later dropped this portion of the order, as solicitor general (SG) Tushar Mehta preferred Karnataka high court and a set of lawyers favoured Delhi high court which had decided an issue regarding discrepancies in the answer key of CLAT 2025 question paper. The bench, also comprising justice PV Sanjay Kumar, however, did not bar proceedings before the high courts. "Notwithstanding our order.

Himachal: An amount of Rs 50 crore released for Bulk Drug Park, Industry Minister Harsh Vardhan Chauhan gave information

Diary Times Desk : The Himachal Pradesh government has released an amount of Rs 50 crore for the Bulk Drug Park. Approval has been given to issue tenders for site development, boundary wall, internal roads at a cost of Rs 460 crore in the first phase of the park. Out of 1400 acres of land, 800 acres of land will be developed in the first phase. Industry Minister Harsh Vardhan Chauhan gave this information while chairing the fifth meeting of the high powered committee of the state implementation agency of the Bulk Drug Park on Wednesday. He said that construction, operation and maintenance of Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD), steam generation and solid waste management will be clubbed together in a single bid on engineering procurement and construction model. He also directed the project management consultancy firm to prepare the norms for operation and maintenance of these technical utilities. The Industry Minister also directed to constitute an advisory panel of experts of the Bulk Drug Park so that their role in the construction of the park is not ignored. He asked to constitute a technical committee under the chairmanship of Chief Engineer Public Works Department, Hamirpur region to examine the technical bid of the tender documents. Earlier, Director of Industries Department Yunus gave a detailed presentation showing the recent developments related to the Bulk Drug Park. Additional Chief Secretary Industries RD Nazim, MD HPSIDC Rajeshwar Goyal, Additional CEO Industries Tilak Raj Sharma and other officials were present in the meeting. Industry Minister Harsh Vardhan Chauhan, while chairing the fifth meeting of the high-powered committee of the state implementation agency of Bulk Drug Park on Wednesday.

"When INDIA Bloc Was Formed...": Allies' Reminder To Congress Before Delhi Poll

Agencies : Fissures within the INDIA opposition bloc continued apace Wednesday morning after the Samajwadi Party and the Trinamool Congress threw their weight behind the Aam Aadmi Party - and seemed to criticise the Congress, the group head - before the February 5 Delhi Assembly election. The AAP and the Congress are contesting this election independently, a development that has fuelled further speculation about the survival of an INDIA bloc that put up a strong showing in last year's Lok Sabha poll, but has since slipped to multiple state poll defeats and bitter infighting. That infighting - specifically between the AAP and the Congress - bubbled over into demands by the former that the latter be sacked as bloc leader and booted from the alliance. This was after harsh comments by the Congress' Delhi leader, Ajay Maken, targeting AAP boss Arvind Kejriwal. "The SP... Congress... AAP. All of us want to win in Delhi. We want this alliance to continue... the AAP is in a strong position in Delhi... but it has become AAP vs Congress in Delhi," SP boss Akhilesh Yadav lamented, "It is my suggestion the INDIA bloc should support the AAP..."



HRTC Driver Suicide Case: HRTC driver took 72 leaves in seven months, remained on leave even without getting approval

Diary Times Desk : The preliminary investigation of the corporation management in the case of the death of the driver of Path Parivahan Nigam (HRTC) in Dharampur has been completed. Many revelations have been made in the investigation. In the investigation report submitted by DM Mandi to the Managing Director of the Corporation, the service record of the deceased driver was scrutinized. According to the preliminary report, the driver had joined the Dharampur unit of HRTC on 3 June 2024. From this date to 3 January 2025, the driver was on leave for 72 days. Between 7 December 2024 and 3 January 2025, the driver took 28 days leave. On January 7, 5 days leave was sought from the bus station in-charge Dharampur, but the driver remained on leave without getting the leave approved. A disciplinary inquiry was set up against the said driver for driving recklessly and violating the rules several times. The corporation management found in the report that driver Sanjay Kumar was on leave for 30 percent of the time during his services in the Dharampur unit. In the preliminary report, the corporation found that the driver Sanjay Kumar was suspended from Rampur unit for consuming alcohol and driving the bus carelessly.



Bilaspur News: Video posted on social media with a double-barreled gun, the court sent the accused on one-day remand

Diary Times Desk : In Bilaspur district, once again a case of uploading a video on social media with a double-barreled gun with the intention of spreading terror has come to light. After the video reached the police, the accused has been arrested. Sadar police station has registered a case. According to the information, on Tuesday, Sadar police station received information that a youth has uploaded a video on social media while loading cartridges in a gun. The police investigated the video. The youth who uploaded the video was identified as Kibti Thakur, resident of village Tared Post Office Chandpur District Bilaspur. The police team raided the house and arrested the accused. He was produced in the district court on Wednesday, from where he has been sent on one-day remand. The police is also searching for the gun seen in the video. Additional Superintendent of Police Shiv Chaudhary said that further action is being taken.

Una News: Sham Minhas of Chintpurni assembly constituency became BJP district president

Diary Times Desk : Sham Minhas of Chintpurni assembly constituency has been elected as the District BJP President. This decision was taken after a meeting chaired by Bilaspur Sadar MLA Trilok Jamwal at BJP District Office Deepakmal at 4 pm on Wednesday. All party officials and workers unanimously welcomed this decision. According to the information, Sham Minhas, a resident of village Panjoa, Gram Panchayat Ladrol of Nagar Amb of Chintpurni assembly constituency, has been playing various roles in BJP for about 25 years. He was the President of Chintpurni BJP Mandal for seven years. After this, he held the post of BJP District General Secretary for about three years. He was considered to be the front runner among the contenders for the new BJP President from the beginning. The party high command approved this.

Shimla News: A man of Nepali origin killed his partner, both used to work in the garden; used to live together

Diary Times Desk : In Kumarsain, a Nepali man killed another Nepali man. Police have arrested the accused and registered a case of murder. The accused will be produced in court. Police is investigating the case. According to police, the accused committed the crime in a drunken state. Both the deceased and the murderer worked as labourers in an apple orchard of an orchardist. Both were living in the same room. The deceased has been identified as 30-year-old Arjun of Nepali origin and the accused as 37-year-old Karan. The reasons for the murder have not been revealed. In a complaint to the police, Dev Raj Chauhan of Ghumna village said that a month ago he met two Nepali youths Karan and Arjun through his uncle's son Basant Lal. After talking, he called both the youths to work in his orchard. According to the complainant, on the evening of January 14, he had gone to Malandi village for his work. While returning Arjun asked him for 500 rupees for market expenses which he gave. At 6:45 pm he spoke to Karan over phone and Karan told him that both of them were present in the camp. Next day at around 7:30 am Lalit from the village called Dev Raj and told him that a Nepali was sleeping in the field near the camp.

Himachal: Income Tax Department raids private company in Jhadmajri, Baddi, scrutinizes records

Diary Times Desk : The Central Income Tax Department raided a drug company Cap Tab Pharma in the industrial area Jhadmajri on Wednesday. The department's team scrutinized the company's records and seized some important documents. The reasons why the Income Tax Department team raided the place are not yet known. The Central Income Tax Department team reached the drug company at 6:00 am on Wednesday, but due to lack of electricity, the team members had to wait for a long time to proceed with the action. The power was cut off due to a technical fault in the company's transformer. The electricity board restored power at around 1 pm, after which the Income Tax Department team started scrutinizing the documents and records. The team kept scrutinizing the company's records till evening. The Income Tax Department officials had come in two vehicles. Earlier, the Income Tax Department asked for force from the Baddi Police, after which the Superintendent of Police of Baddi provided 12-13 police personnel. ASP Ashok Kumar said that the Income Tax Department had demanded police personnel.

Himachal News: IAS officers Mansi, Rohan, Paruthi and Vinod became secretaries, 13 other IAS officers also got promoted

Diary Times Desk : Four IAS officers of the 2009 batch have become secretaries in the Himachal government. Manasi Sahay Thakur, Rohan Chand Thakur, Dr. RK Paruthi and Vinod Kumar have been promoted on the recommendation of the screening committee. The officers have been given the post of secretary after completing a total of 16 years in the ISS cadre. With four promotions, the number of secretary level officers in the state has now increased to 19. 15 officers are already in the secretary rank in the state government. All four officers have received the pay matrix of Super Time Scale of IAS Level 14. The notification for promoting four IAS officers was issued by the Personnel Department on Wednesday. Manasi Sahay Thakur has recently gone on deputation to the Government of India. In such a situation, she will get the post of secretary on returning to the Himachal government. Currently, she has been promoted on the basis of performance. Rohan Chand Thakur is appointed as Managing Director in HRTC, Dr. RK Paruthi as Registrar Cooperative Society and Vinod Kumar as Divisional Commissioner Kangra. Chief Secretary Prabodh Saxena issued the promotion order and said that all these officers will continue to work on their current posts. Meanwhile, 13 other IAS officers have also been promoted. The government has given the next level pay matrix to these officers.

AIIMS Bilaspur: 127 SR posts will be filled in AIIMS Bilaspur, notification issued; Application forms will be available

Diary Times Desk : All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bilaspur has issued a notification for recruitment to 127 faculty posts. For a long time, notifications have been issued by AIIMS management to fill the posts of specialists, but the posts have not been filled in some departments yet. AIIMS Bilaspur has not yet been able to appoint a specialist doctor in the Gastroenterology department. In this notification, two posts will be filled in the Gastroenterology department. Apart from this, posts of main departments like Medicine, Gynaecology, General Surgery, Pediatrics, Anesthesia are included. Let us tell you that notifications have been issued earlier also to fill these posts.

ED arrests ex-Chhattisgarh excise minister Kawasi Lakhma in liquor scam

Agencies : The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday arrested former Chhattisgarh excise minister and incumbent Congress MLA Kawasi Lakhma in an alleged liquor 'scam', reported news agency PTI. ED had said on Monday that the senior Congress leader used to "receive" a substantial amount in cash on a monthly basis out of proceeds of crime generated from the alleged liquor scam estimated to be around ₹2,161 crore. As per the agency, Kawasi Lakhma was the main recipient of proceeds of crime in cash during his regime as excise minister in the previous Congress government the state, news agency ANI reported. The ED's investigation into the liquor scam, which is alleged to have taken place between 2019 and 2022, uncovered that illegal commissions were generated through various illicit means. According to the central agency, bribes were collected from distillers for each "case" of liquor procured by the Chhattisgarh State Marketing Corporation Limited (CSMCL), the state body responsible for the purchase and sale of liquor.

Vehicle pile-up amid dense fog injures 3, kills over 100 goats on Agra-Delhi Expressway

Agencies : A major vehicle pile-up on Wednesday on the Agra-Delhi Expressway due to dense fog left three people injured and over 100 goats dead, police said, adding that six vehicles were severely damaged in the incident that took place amid poor visibility conditions. The accident took place on Agra-Delhi Expressway near Tapal town. Among the vehicles involved in the accident was a truck carrying approximately 230 goats, news agency PTI quoted police as saying. Six vehicles, including three trucks, were severely damaged in the pile-up. The injured were taken to a nearby hospital, a police official said. In a similar incident, fog caused collision of 15 vehicles near the Jansath flyover on the Delhi-Dehradun National Highway. The accident in Muzaffarnagar took place in the early hours of the morning when two trucks collided against each other in near-zero visibility due to dense fog. Thereafter, over 15 vehicles collided with each other on the highway. Circle Officer Rupali Rao said the police were informed about the incident and rushed to the spot to carry out rescue operations. "Two injured persons were taken to the district hospital for treatment," she said. The highway was blocked after the accident but has been cleared, and the traffic is moving again.

"Ugly Truth Exposed": BJP On Rahul Gandhi's 'Fighting Indian State' Remark



Agencies : The BJP today launched a sharp attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi after he said the Opposition was fighting not just the BJP, but the Indian State. Union Health Minister and BJP president JP Nadda said the Congress's "ugly truth now stands exposed". Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman asked why Mr Gandhi carried a copy of the Constitution if he thought the Opposition was fighting the State. Addressing a gathering at the inauguration of the Congress's new headquarters in Delhi, Mr Gandhi slammed the BJP and its ideological parent RSS. "Our ideology like the RSS ideology is thousands of years old and it has been fighting the RSS ideology for thousands of years. Do not think that we are fighting a fair fight. There is no fairness in this. If you believe that we are fighting a political organisation called the BJP or RSS, you have not understood what is going on. The BJP and the RSS have captured every single institution of our country. We are now fighting the BJP, the RSS and the Indian State itself," he said.

Supreme Court stays arrest of ex-IAS trainee Puja Khedkar in UPSC cheating case

Agencies : The Supreme Court on Wednesday ordered a stay on the arrest of former IAS probationary officer Puja Khedkar who was accused of fraudulently appearing for the UPSC civil service examination 2022. The top court issued a notice to the Delhi Police and the UPSC on Puja Khedkar's plea seeking anticipatory bail and directed the protection to operate until the next hearing date. A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and Satish Chandra Sharma posted the matter for further hearing on February 14 and ordered that no coercive action be taken against her.

Indian Panel Recommends Action Against Ex-Spy 'CCI' In US Murder Plot Case

Agencies : A committee set up by the Union government has recommended that legal action be taken against a former Indian intelligence officer, identified as 'CCI' in an indictment filed in New York City, for allegedly orchestrating a foiled plot to assassinate Khalistani terrorist Gurupatwant Singh Pannun, who is a dual US-Canadian citizen. The enquiry committee was formed to probe the individual's links with the drug mafia and criminal gangs after allegations surfaced that a plot was hatched to kill Pannun in the US.

Supreme Court asks EC to not announce Bihar legislative council bypoll result

Agencies : The Supreme Court on Wednesday restrained the Election Commission of India from declaring the Bihar legislative council by-election result for the seat previously held by expelled RJD leader Sunil Kumar Singh. On July 26, last year, Singh was expelled from the Bihar legislative council for unruly behaviour in the House. Singh, considered close to Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) supremo Lalu Prasad and his family, was charged for sloganeering against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on February 13, 2024.

"Like A Deer Runs...": BJP's Ramesh Bidhuri's Latest Crude Jab At Atishi

Agencies : Senior BJP leader Ramesh Bidhuri made a sexist remark about Delhi Chief Minister Atishi on Wednesday, declaring the AAP leader is "roaming the city like a deer". At a rally in the national capital, which will hold an Assembly election in three weeks, he said, "Dilli ki janta nark bhog rahi hai galiyon mei... galiyon ki halat dekhiye... Kabhi Atishi nahi gayi milne logon se. Lekin ab chunaav ke samay jaise jungle mei hirmi bhaagti hai vaise Atishi Dilli ki sadko pr hirmi jaise ghoom rahi hain." Translated, the remark means, "The people of Delhi are suffering in the streets of Delhi... Look at the condition of the streets... In the last four years, Atishi never came to meet the people and now when the elections are here, she is roaming on the streets of Delhi like a deer runs in the forest." The AAP has yet to respond to Bidhuri's crude jab. Atishi - who succeeded party boss Arvind Kejriwal to the top post after he was forced to stand down last year over involvement in an alleged corruption scam - will contest the February 5 poll from Delhi's Kalkaji. The BJP has named Bidhuri - no stranger to incendiary remarks against political rivals, including communal slurs against then BSP leader Danish Ali - as its candidate for that seat.



Israel, Hamas Reach Ceasefire Agreement Designed To End Gaza War: Report

Agencies : Israel and Hamas have reached a landmark agreement to cease hostilities in Gaza and exchange Israeli hostages for Palestinian prisoners. This breakthrough comes after months of intense negotiations facilitated by Egyptian and Qatari mediators, with the support of the United States. The deal is particularly significant, given its timing, just ahead of the January 20 inauguration of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump. The conflict between Israel and Hamas has been devastating, with Israeli troops invading Gaza after Hamas-led gunmen breached security barriers, killing 1,200 soldiers and civilians, and abducting over 250 hostages. The humanitarian toll has been staggering, with more than 46,000 people killed and hundreds of thousands displaced, struggling to survive in makeshift shelters. The agreement is seen as a crucial step towards ending the 15-month war that has ravaged the Middle East. President-elect Trump had been vocal about his desire for a swift resolution, warning of severe consequences if the hostages were not released. His Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff, worked closely with President Joe Biden's team to facilitate the deal.

Agencies Warn Of Trump's Inauguration Being A Target For Violent Extremists

Agencies : The upcoming inauguration of President-elect Donald Trump is expected to be a highly secured event, with U.S. national security agencies warning that it could be an attractive target for violent extremists. Despite no specific credible threats, the agencies are taking precautions due to the heightened political environment and potential for violence. Since the two assassination attempts on Trump, during the 2024 campaign and the recent attacks this year in New Orleans and Las Vegas, officials have been on high alert. Perpetrators may see the swearing-in as "their last opportunity to influence the election results through violence," as a group of intelligence wrote in a threat assessment, accessed by POLITICO. The threat assessment, compiled by the FBI, Secret Service, Capitol Police, and other agencies.

German Defence Ministry suspends accounts on Elon Musk's X over lack of factual debate

Agencies : The German defence ministry and the Bundeswehr national army have decided to suspend their accounts on Elon Musk's social media platform X, citing the platform's inability to foster factual debate, according to Politico. The move follows Musk's controversial actions on X, including endorsing the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party in December and criticising mainstream German politicians. Musk referred to Chancellor Olaf Scholz, a centre-left leader, as a "fool" and promoted the AfD as the only force capable of "saving" the country. The decision to exit the platform by the defence ministry, which is led by Scholz's social-democratic ally Boris Pistorius, came after Musk hosted a live chat on X with Alice Weidel, the AfD's candidate for chancellor in Germany's upcoming snap election on February 23. The defense ministry cited the difficulty of maintaining an objective exchange of arguments on the platform as the primary reason for its departure. This move has sparked discussions within the German government about whether other institutions should follow suit, the Politico report adds.



Biden to Deliver Farewell Address, Capping a 5-Decade Political Career



Agencies : President Biden plans to deliver a prime-time farewell address to the nation on Wednesday, putting a capstone on his five-decade political career just days before he leaves an office he has long revered and is leaving only reluctantly. The White House would not disclose what Mr. Biden plans to say in his speech, set for 8 p.m. Eastern. But in his final months he has been seeking to cement a legacy as a transformative president that stabilized domestic politics while bolstering America's leadership abroad, one who ushered the nation out of a pandemic, made historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy, and worked to strengthen democratic institutions both nationally and globally. In a letter published early Wednesday before his address, Mr. Biden said the country was "stronger, more prosperous and more secure" than it was four years ago.

RedNote becomes most downloaded app on US Apple App Store as threat of TikTok ban looms

Agencies : With the threat of a TikTok ban looming large, American social media users are flocking en masse to Chinese social media app Xiaohongshu (also called RedNote) - making it the most downloaded app on the US Apple App Store. According to NBC News, RedNote became the top free-to-download app on the Apple App Store this Monday, followed by TikTok's sister app Lemon8. It maintained its position as the most downloaded app on Tuesday as well. Users say they are switching to RedNote in case TikTok is banned this Sunday. TikTok, which has been a cultural phenomenon, could be banned on January 19 under a law that forces the platform to cut ties with its China-based parent company, ByteDance, or shut down its US operation.

Poland says Russia planned 'acts of terrorism' on airlines across world

Agencies : Russia planned 'acts of terrorism' in the air against Poland and other countries, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said on Wednesday after meeting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy in Warsaw. Security officials have said that parcels that exploded at logistics depots in Europe were part of a test run for a Russian plot to trigger explosions on cargo flights to the United States. The explosions occurred in depots in Britain, Germany and Poland in July. Russia has denied involvement in the incidents, and Tusk did not mention them specifically. "The latest information can confirm the validity of fears that Russia was planning acts of terrorism in the air not only against Poland," Tusk told a news conference. He did not say what acts he was referring to or elaborate on the contents of the information. Moscow has regularly denied any involvement in the courier depot explosions, as well as break-ins, arson and attacks on individuals, which Western officials say were carried out by operatives paid by Russia. The Russian embassy in Warsaw has not immediately replied to an emailed request for comment on Tusk's statement.

Michelle Obama Likely To Not Attend Donald Trump's Swearing-In Ceremony

Agencies : Former US first lady Michelle Obama will not attend US President-elect Donald Trump's swearing-in ceremony on January 20, her office announced on Tuesday, without sharing explanation for her decision, CNN reported. A statement from the Office of Barack and Michelle Obama said, "Former President Barack Obama is confirmed to attend the 60th Inaugural Ceremonies. Former First Lady Michelle Obama will not attend the upcoming inauguration." The decision to not attend Trump's swearing-in is a break with tradition for the ceremony, which former presidents and first ladies usually attend. Former US President George Bush and his wife, Laura Bush, will attend the inauguration, his office announced. According to sources familiar, former US President Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton will attend the swearing-in ceremony, CNN reported. Michelle Obama did not attend the memorial service for former US President Jimmy Carter last week.

111 farmers begin fast-unto-death at Khanauri border in solidarity with Dallewal



Agencies : Intensifying their stir against the Centre in support of their demands, a 'jatha' of 111 farmers wearing black clothes crossed the barbed fence into Haryana at the Khanauri border and started their fast-unto-death. The group that is holding the protest in solidarity with farmer leader Jagjit Dallewal held a prayer before commencing the fast. After talks with the officials of the Haryana government, the farmers had agreed to start their protest a few metres from the designated site. However, farmer leader Kaka Singh Kotra said the protest started in the Haryana area and not in Punjab. The area falls in Jind. Haryana DSP Amit Bhatia said talks were on with farmer leaders and they had been told about the imposition of Section 163 of the BNSS in the area. "We are showing utmost restraint and requested the farmer leaders that no such action should be taken that creates a law and order problem," said Bhatia. Kotra said the Haryana police had told them of imposition of Section 163 of the BNSS.

Mohali court rejects bail plea of sacked DSP Sandhu in corruption case

Agencies : A Mohali court on Wednesday dismissed the bail application of sacked DSP Gursher Singh Sandhu in the 2024 Prevention of Corruption Act case. Sandhu is also an accused in the alleged facilitation of video interview of gangster Lawrence Bishnoi in custody. Sandhu had applied for bail on January 10 contending that the FIR No 33 registered against him by the State Crime Branch in 2024 was erroneous. On a complaint of a Mohali resident, Baljinder Singh, a real estate dealer, a case was registered by the State Crime Branch on October 15, 2024, for allegedly misusing his official position to gain monetary benefits in connection with disputed properties.

CBI court dismisses anticipatory bail plea of ED officer in 'bribery' case

Agencies : A CBI court in Chandigarh has dismissed the anticipatory bail application of Vishal Deep, an ED officer, in an alleged bribery case. CBI had registered an FIR against Deep, a former Assistant Director-II (Intelligence) in Shimla, on December 22, 2024, under the Prevention of Corruption Act. The officer was posted from November 2023 till December 23, 2024, in Shimla. The FIR was filed based on complaints from directors of two educational institutions, alleging that Deep and other ED officials demanded bribes to avoid arrest in cases involving their institutions. CBI alleged that Deep, with the help of his relatives, extorted money by threatening arrest in the investigation he oversaw. In his bail plea, Deep claimed he was investigating an alleged scholarship scam during his posting in Shimla. He alleged that a CBI DSP and one of the complainants tried to bribe him to dilute charges. Deep claimed he was falsely implicated by CBI to shield senior officers and complainants involved in the scam. The public prosecutor opposed the bail application, and after hearing arguments, the court dismissed Deep's plea.

Blast in Amritsar as grenade hurled at house of Bikram Majithia's confidant

Agencies : There was a blast as two motorcycle-borne men hurled a grenade at the house of the former Zila Parishad chairman, late Rajinder Kumar, also called Pappu Jaintipuria, here on Wednesday night. Jaintipuria was a close confidant of SAD leader Bikram Majithia, who shared the incident on social media. While questioning the law and order situation in Punjab, Majithia tagged CM Bhagwant Mann, DGP Gaurav Yadav and the Amritsar rural police. He claimed that Amandeep Kumar, son of Jaintipuria, and the family had been getting threats from foreign-based gangsters. The incident took place at around 7.50 pm. Senior police officials reached the spot and started an investigation. CCTV footage of the suspects lobbing the grenade has surfaced.

SC dismisses ED's plea seeking cancellation of Sukhpal Khaira's bail



Agencies : The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed the Enforcement Directorate's petition seeking cancellation of bail granted to Punjab Congress MLA Sukhpal Khaira by the Punjab and Haryana High Court in a money-laundering case. The ED had challenged the January 27, 2022, order of the Punjab and Haryana High Court granting bail to Khaira in connection with a 2015 case arising out of a case under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985. But a Bench led by Justice MM Sundresh rejected the ED's petition, saying it was not inclined to entertain it. Additional Solicitor General SV Raju alleged that Khaira was delaying the trial by filing applications that the trial should not proceed. "I am extremely grateful to Almighty waheguru and Hon'ble Supreme Court for ensuring justice to me today by dismissing the bail cancellation plea of ED," Khaira wrote on X.

Portal glitch may have skewed sex ratio data: Health officials

Agencies : Under scrutiny for the lowest sex ratio in Haryana in the past eight years, the Health Department officials have attributed the decline partly to a glitch in the Civil Registration System (CRS) in 2024. The CRS, a Government of India portal for birth registrations, reportedly faced major issues in June and July 2024, affecting data accuracy in districts such as Gurugram, Faridabad, Hisar and Rohtak. According to a senior Health Department official, a significant portion of birth registration data from these two months remains untraceable. "Getting birth certificates for these months has been a Herculean task for many. The glitches in recording and recovering data have impacted the calculation of the sex ratio in major districts," the official said, adding that the system has since been streamlined. While Gurugram Chief Medical Officer Dr Virender Yadav declined to comment, sources confirmed that the Health Department is reverifying CRS data against the reported sex ratio figures. Health Minister Arti Singh Rao acknowledged the CRS-related issues, stating, "The department is verifying the data sourced from the Civil Registration System. The portal faced challenges during its revamp by the Government of India in 2024. We are reviewing the reasons for the decline but remain focused on stringent enforcement."

Shivaji's statue to come up at Panipat's Kala Amb: Fadnavis

Agencies : Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Tuesday announced that Shivaji's statue would be established at Kala Amb, a historical memorial of the three battles of Panipat. He was addressing a gathering as a chief guest at a programme organised by the Shaurya Samarak Committee at Kala Amb. Fadnavis said Maharashtra would jointly organise the programme with the Haryana Government next year. "Historical land Panipat gives the message of bravery and unity. From here, the Marathas got the formula to live in unity, and after this, they established Hind Swaraj," he said, adding that the Marathas re-established the saffron in the country after teaching the invaders a lesson. The Marathas fought for God, country and religion after shunning narrow interests. If any other king had come forward to help the Marathas, Abdali would have been defeated, he said.

CM Sukhu to start 10 days' winter sojourn of Kangra from Thursday

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu would start his ten-day winter sojourn in Dharamsala from Thursday. During the winter sojourn, the CM would stay in Dharamsala circuit house and tour various areas of Kangra district, and inaugurate and lay foundation stone of various developmental projects in the district. As per the tour program of the CM released here on Wednesday, he would reach Dharamsala tomorrow afternoon and would hold a meeting with the officials regarding the ongoing developmental projects. Sukhu would also listen to the grievances of the public in Dharamsala mini secretariat tomorrow. On January 17, the CM would inaugurate various projects in Dharamsala, including a meeting hall of Zila Parishad, women police station in police lines, and hostel building of mountaineering institute in Mcleodganj. He would lay the foundation stone of food street market being developed under the Smart City project on International Cricket Stadium road.

Manali Winter Queen auditions scheduled in Chandigarh on January 15

Diary Times Desk : The auditions for the Winter Queen beauty pageant during the five-day-long national level Manali Winter Carnival to be held from January 20 to 24 will be held in the auditorium Department of Zoology, Panjab University, Chandigarh on January 15. The winner of the pageant will be awarded Rs 1 lakh and a crown. The 1st runner up will be presented Rs 50,000 and 2nd runner up will be given Rs 30,000. Manali Winter Carnival Organising Committee Vice Chairman and Manali SDM Raman Sharma said that adequate arrangements of board and lodging of the selected contestants for the pageant have been made. He said, "Various rounds of the pageant based on different themes are held daily in the evenings in Manu Rangshala. The crowd cheers as the beauties hit the ramp. The contestants are also assessed on their performance in various other activities conducted during the fiesta.

43 villages designated as eco-sensitive zones near wildlife sanctuary in Himachal's Mandi



Diary Times Desk : The Government of India has designated areas around Shikari Devi Wildlife Sanctuary, located in Mandi district, as eco-sensitive zones (ESZs) to reduce the impact of urbanisation and developmental activities on the surrounding protected areas. The sanctuary, which spans 29.94 sq km, came into existence in 1962 as an effort to conserve wildlife in the region. The ESZ includes 43 villages of the Nachan Forest Division and the Karsog Forest Division. The Nachan division includes 34 villages, while Karsog division includes nine villages. The ESZ was declared under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, to restrict human activities, except agriculture, in the designated areas. According to Surender Kashyap, Divisional Forest Officer of Nachan and member secretary of the ESZ, the primary goal is to reduce deforestation and human-wildlife conflict. The zone will be managed using a core and buffer model, aiming to protect wildlife while benefiting local communities. The designated sensitive zone is defined from 50 m to 2 km around the sanctuary.

CBI court dismisses anticipatory bail plea of ED officer in 'bribery' case

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Himachal Govt ropes in NGO to help curb drug menace, forest fires

Diary Times Desk : The Himachal Government has tied up with Needle Leaf Foundation-The Saviour, an NGO, to control the rising cases of drug abuse among youth and check forest fires. Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu inaugurated these two projects, which will be implemented by the NGO, here on Tuesday. The CM praised the efforts made by the members of the organisation, and said the state government had ensured multi-dimensional measures to control forest fires. "Efforts are being made to adopt modern technology in combating forest fires which destroy valuable forest wealth each summers to minimize the damage and prevent fires," he said. He said a comprehensive campaign had been launched in the state to prevent the abuse of narcotics and drugs. "Work is being carried at the inter-state level to stop the smuggling of drugs by working on intelligence received from the neighbouring states in this regard," he said. He expressed hope that the efforts of the organisation would strengthen the work being carried out by the government in this direction and combat the growing menace of drug addiction and trafficking. The NGO's president, Sunil Grover, gave detailed information.

Expedite purchase of 327 e-buses, Himachal CM directs officials

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu today directed officials to expedite the purchase process of 327 e-buses. While chairing a review meeting of Himachal Road Transport Corporation (HRTC) here, he asked the officials to complete all the formalities related to the process in a time-bound manner. He said that 100 Matador mini buses would also be purchased to provide better facilities in remote rural areas. The availability of these buses would also ensure further improvement in the fiscal health and services of the HRTC, he added. Sukhu also gave instructions to take measures to make the HRTC self-reliant. "Due to the dedicated services of its employees, the financial condition of the corporation is improving and in the last few months the income of the corporation has also witness a substantial increase," he said. He said that the use of new technology was being ensured to make the corporation profitable and efficient. The HRTC has also started cashless payment option in its buses, making Himachal the first state to provide such facility. He also reviewed the performance, income and expenditure of the HRTC at the divisional and regional level, and gave necessary guidelines to the officers.



Bad News For India: Jasprit Bumrah Advised Bed Rest Ahead Of Champions Trophy

Agencies : Team India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah's participation in the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy is under serious doubt, with the player asked to rest at home. Bumrah, who took 32 wickets during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, returned home last week after a long tour Down Under. According to a report in Times of India (TOI), Bumrah has been advised bed rest at home, and it is highly unlikely that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) will rush the player's recovery process. The report said that Bumrah will have to report to BCCI's Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Bengaluru, but the date of his check-in is yet to be confirmed. "Bumrah could go to the CoE next week but right now there is no fixed date yet. He has been advised bed rest at home to help the muscles recover and the swelling to subside. Once that is done, future course of action will be ascertained," the reports quoted the source as saying. While initial reports hinted that it was a case of swelling, Bumrah could be ruled of action for longer than expected as the "stakeholders" don't want to aggravate his injury. "Bed rest doesn't sound good. I hope it's not a disc bulge or a muscle swelling which is of a higher grade.



Really good signs for women's cricket: Smriti Mandhana

Agencies : On a day when India's batters tore apart the record books en route to a series whitewash, captain Smriti Mandhana appeared visibly pleased at the post-match press conference. Just three days after posting their previous highest ODI total of 370/5, India's batters breezed past the 400-run mark and finished with 435/5, a new record that also set up their biggest win in the format. Talking about the records, Mandhana expressed her elation but was also pragmatic about the conditions on offer. "Yeah, definitely. I think putting 400-plus, these are really good signs for women's cricket. I mean, I know the wicket was really good to bat on. Rajkot is always a good wicket to bat on, but really pleased with all the girls, the way they batted today. And even when they came out to bowl, I think really clinical with their performance." After the second ODI, Jemimah Rodrigues had gone on record about possibly attempting the 400-run mark next time around, given the refreshing intent with which the side had batted in the series. With Mandhana and fellow opener Pratika Rawal once again going all guns blazing from the start, the new milestone seemed inevitable today. Yet, the Indian captain revealed that it wasn't as much in the plans.

Rohit Sharma yet to confirm his availability for Mumbai's Ranji Trophy clash: Report

Agencies : India captain Rohit Sharma has reportedly not confirmed his availability for Mumbai's Elite Group A Ranji Trophy match against Jammu and Kashmir, scheduled to begin on January 23. An official from the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) mentioned that the selectors are expected to announce the squad on January 20, before which they will follow the standard procedure of confirming the availability of players. Rohit is likely to be approached around this time about his decision on selection. "The selectors are expected to announce the squad on January 20, during which they will follow the due process of checking for the availability of every player. Rohit will also be approached around the time for selection," a Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) official told PTI. Currently, the 37-year-old is striving to overcome a poor run of form with the bat, having scored only 31 runs in the three Tests he played during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy against Australia. Rohit was absent after a couple of initial practice sessions earlier this week but was spotted batting alongside Mumbai captain Ajinkya Rahane at the Wankhede Stadium on Tuesday.

Padikkal, Shetty star as Karnataka progress to the final

Agencies : Karnataka secured their fifth Vijay Hazare Trophy final appearance with a convincing five-wicket victory over defending champions Haryana in Vadodara. Abhilash Shetty's brilliant four-wicket haul restricted Haryana to a below-par 237/9, before Devdutt Padikkal (86) and Smaran Ravichandran (76) guided the chase with ease. Put in to bat at the Kotambi Stadium, Haryana started well, reaching 102/1 thanks to solid contributions from Himanshu Rana (43) and Ankit Kumar (41). However, their momentum stalled when Shreyas Gopal broke a 70-run partnership, triggering a collapse that saw Haryana lose four wickets for just 27 runs. Shetty was instrumental with the ball, claiming the opening wicket and then removing Nishant Sindhu and Parth Vats in the same over. Despite small partnerships along the way, Haryana could only reach 198 before an unbeaten 39-run stand between Anuj Thakral (23* off 15) and Amit Rana (15* off 16) gave the total a late boost. At the post-match presentation, Kumar admitted the team was "20 to 30 runs short." Shetty finished with impressive figures of 4 for 34, supported by Prasad Krishna (2 for 40) and Gopal (2 for 36). Karnataka's chase began shakily as captain and in-form batter Mayank Agarwal was trapped lbw for a duck by Anshul Kamboj in the first over.



Short TAKES

India's Arjun Erigaisi defeats Magnus Carlsen, Fabiano Caruana to win online chess event

Agencies : Indian grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi on Tuesday won the early Titled Tuesday weekly blitz competition conducted by Chess.com, reported First Post, beating the World No 1 Magnus Carlsen and World No 2 Fabiano Caruana. According to the report, the 21-year-old finished with 10 points from 11 rounds. He defeated Magnus Carlsen with black pieces in round 10, before beating Fabiano Caruana in the 11th and final round. Earlier in round seven, Arjun Erigaisi lost only one match to American grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura. Erigaisi is the fourth-ranked player in the world, while Nakamura is the third in FIDE classical ratings. World Chess Champion D Gukesh didn't not participate in the Titled Tuesday event, which is an online event open where titled players with genuine Chess.com profiles. All these players were asked to be available for Zoom calls for fair play reasons. The latest Titled Tuesday witnessed more than 900 participants. Nakamura has claimed to be the "world's strongest tournament", added the report. Born into a Telugu family in Telangana's Warangal, Arjun Erigaisi studied chess at the BS Chess Academy in Hanamkonda.

Pakistan selectors decide to name Saim Ayub in Champions Trophy provisional squad

Agencies : Pakistan selectors have decided to include opener Saim Ayub, who is recuperating from a right ankle injury, in the provisional squad for the Champions Trophy beginning next month. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has not disclosed the squad officially but it contains most of the premier stars such as Shaheen Shah Afridi, Haris Rauf, Nasim Shah, Fakhar Zaman and Shadab Khan. An insider said the selectors included Saim as they feel even if he is not recovered in time to play the ICC showpiece he can be replaced by another player. Changes to the preliminary squad can be made until February 13. Saim is presently in London on PCB expenses and final reports of the examination done by two high-profile orthopaedic sports surgeons are awaited. The reason for Saim still remaining in London is if the doctors recommend, he can do his rehabilitation with them there and the doctors can also keep a close.